11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

ments of Egyptians, Mahdists, and Europeans. His domestic policy was more concerned with the imposition of religious uniformity than with political transformation.

Menelik revived Tēwodros' policy of creating a band of generals loyal only to himself. He did this partly by raising capable men with no connections to high position: Rās Gobānā and Fitāwrāri Hābta Giyorgis, two of his most important generals, were originally Galla prisoners. The power of the feudal chieftains he manipulated by traditional techniques, sending them to posts far removed from their home bases, and arranging political marriages. But Menelik did not decisively undercut the authority of the great provincial lords, and at his death the old political structure was still more or less intact.

The experience of these emperors was not forgotten by Haile Selassie, who seems to have made it his primary and unceasing ambition to assure his position by breaking down every sort of autonomous power where it previously existed or threatened to develop. Thanks to his policies of centralization and to modern means of transport and communication he was able to become more of an effective autocrat than any of his predecessors.

The main development during the period of his regency as Rās Tafari (1917–28) was the stiffening of his military posture. To start with he had the regional forces of Harar Province, formerly his father's governorship, which he had acquired through the favor of Empress Taitu (Menelik's wife) following Menelik's paralysis. He built up his strength by making improvements in Harar that increased his revenues and the number of his soldiers, and acquired fiefs elsewhere. Following the death of Empress Zauditu's commander of the imperial troops in 1926, he took command of these troops and brought some of his own forces into Addis Ababa. By 1928 he was strong enough to demand the title of *negus* from Zauditu and, as is well known, acceded as emperor upon her death two years later.

During these years Rās Tafari was gradually promoting the idea of a transformation of the position of the old nobility. As early as 1926 a letter published in his weekly newspaper, *Berhānennā Salām*, suggested that the prevailing feudal system of provincial government be replaced by a system based on salaried administrators.[55] An actual change of that order was out of the question at that time. A contemporary American observer thus described some of the obstacles:

> Ras Hailu of Gojjam, Ras Guksah, chief of Amhara, Dejasmatch Ayalu, powerful head of Simien, Dejasmatch Gabra Salassy of Tigre, and Ras Kassa of Shoa, are supreme lords in the rough highlands of the north country. Far removed from the central authority, thirty to forty days' journey, some of them, they are out of touch—living in a different world from that of Addis Ababa. Hundreds of lesser chiefs rally to their standards, each

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Selassie I theater, and the secondary level art school.* Library facilities included the National Library, with some fifty thousand volumes; the University College Library, with about forty-five; and the reading rooms of the United States Information Service, the British Center, and the Soviet Information Service. The national library also contains a historical museum, and there is a handsome and well appointed archeological museum nearby, neither of which has so far been operated with a view to encouraging public attendance.

Except for occasional lectures sponsored by the national library and the University College extension program, none of the above institutions serves as a center for intellectual communication among adult Ethiopians. It was hoped by some that with the inauguration of the Haile Selassie I University, in December, 1961, a major new center of intellectual life would be created; but the government found it difficult to push ahead with its announced concept of an integrated institution which would operate autonomously and at a high standard.

Outside these institutions, moreover, there have been few channels of communication through which Ethiopian intellectuals can develop their minds and stimulate their imaginations. There are no periodicals to serve as a medium for such communication. One possibility, the *Ethiopian Observer*, is not quite an exception. Limited resources have kept it from operating at as high a level as available talent might permit, and its basically apologetic orientation renders implausible its claims to be "A Journal of Independent Opinion." The daily newspapers which feature contributed articles—the *Ethiopian Herald*, the *Addis Zaman*, and the Amharic sections of the *Voice of Ethiopia*—have tended to exclude pieces that have anything to do with highly controversial matters. Nor are there many social occasions for the serious discussion of intellectual matters. Professional associations, clubs devoted to intellectual matters, and even informal discussion groups exist not at all or else in a very haphazard form.

Contact with the intellectual world outside Ethiopia is almost as meager. Foreign-educated Ethiopians tend to become intellectually demoralized on returning home. The loss of a taste for reading has frequently been one of the first casualties experienced by Western-educated Ethiopians on return from abroad. Only a few hardy souls attempt to maintain some sort of link with the outside world, through subscribing to such magazines as the *New Statesman, Paris Soir,* or *New Republic*. For most of them, coming home means a cessation of the most elementary intellectual functions, other

* In 1963 an Institute of Ethiopian Studies was established at Haile Selassie I University, including a substantial Ethiopiama library and museum.